

Lest We Forget

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THE SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE
OF ST. MARY-OF-THE-WOODS
IN CIVIL WAR SERVICE —



By
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The Military Hospital During the Civil War, Indianapolis, Indiana

LEST WE FORGET



Lest we forget, old stories must be retold. And lest we depart from the high sentiments that inspired heroic nobleness in the past, old pictures must be reproduced. In emulating bygone glories those finer impulses will be developed that are a guaranty of ever-increasing worth, and will prove again that "a nation's greatness lies in its men, not acres."

Our historians have covered Indiana's story with considerable thoroughness; yet, there is one subject that has been only lightly touched upon, namely: the Military Hospital at Indianapolis during the Civil War. This is due to lack of material.

During the years of stress there was no time, seemingly, to write at length, and when leisure came after the War the matter was neglected or postponed in favor of new issues of the moment. Whatever the cause, postponement has had its regrettable consequences.

The sketch here presented contains, besides the newspaper stories and editorials of the War-time, data secured from the Community records of the institution at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. Very little of this material has hitherto been published. In the present awakening of interest in everything connected with Indiana history, this brief narrative, then, will have its place and value.

The building that served as a Military Hospital in Indianapolis during the Civil

War was the old City Hospital located in a then unimproved plat near Fall Creek and Locke Street. It was in charge of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. As the story of the hospital is inseparable from that of the Sisters in service there, some details of the order may be of general interest.

The Sisterhood of Providence originated at Ruille-sur-Loir, France, in 1806, and was organized to meet the pitiful conditions prevailing after the catastrophe of the Great Revolution. The care of disabled victims, and of the sick and suffering of all classes, was traditionary in appeal and purpose of those communities whose foundation lines ran so close to the tremendous upheaval, and there was widespread need of the nurse's

devotedness as well as of the educator's arduous toil.

The founder of the Sisters of Providence was the Rev. Jacques Dujarie, a confessor of the faith, who was ordained in a cellar and said his first Mass in a barn, and suffered great persecutions throughout the Reign of Terror. The first Mother General of the society was Mlle. Josephine Zoe du Roscoat, daughter of Count Casimir du Roscoat, one of the noted exiles of the Revolution. Called the "Angel of Ploermel," for her work among the poor and suffering; of middle age, educated, experienced in the direction of others, and religiously devoted, she was just such a one as Abbe Dujarie needed for his newly-founded community; and kind Providence sent her to him.

Her example and prestige drew many others to the little society, among the number being Mother Theodore Guerin, the foundress of St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Mother Theodore and her five associates arrived at their wilderness home, five miles beyond the Wabash River west of Terre Haute, Indiana, October 22, 1840. Although the Indiana foundation was made chiefly for educational purposes, the religious Rule included in its scope the care of the sick at their homes or in hospitals. Mother Theodore had made in France a four year course in medicine and pharmacy. One of the other pioneer Sisters had had some hospital training. Together they would carry on in the New World, and prepare others to carry on, this work of mercy and zeal as occasion offered.

Primitive as was the beginning at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, a pharmacy was started, and the care of the sick of the neighborhood was a regular occupation in the Community. Many instances of heroism in the discharge of these duties were recorded. At times when the roads were impassable and the cold intense, the Sisters would set out on foot to give succor several miles away, falling often, sometimes crawling over the ice, and all but perishing from exhaustion, bruises, and cold. Once, in the middle of the night, when a courier came for the priest to attend a man who had been crushed by a falling tree, the priest not being at home, Mother Theodore mounted a horse, and with Sister Olympiade riding behind her, holding on in very agony of fear, she followed the courier through

the dark woods, in peril at every moment. Doing what she could to ease the sufferings of the injured man, she then prepared his soul to meet its Judge, and remained praying with him until day-break, when, after Father Corbe's arrival and administration of the sacraments, she closed his eyes in death.

Mother Theodore's example infused courage into the hearts of her Sisters, and a devotedness to the work of caring for the sick and afflicted that took deep root in the Community. The chief work of the order, however, was education. Various establishments were opened in the course of time, besides the boarding school (St. Mary's Academy) founded at the Mother House in 1841, an institution that took rank among the best in the country.

In 1850, Terre Haute already had its parochial grade and high schools; now the Sisters were invited to open a hospital there. But they were not able to undertake it at their own expense, and the city demurred; so the secondary object of the Community's activities during its first twenty years of existence was private and circumscribed.

Cloistered by the majestic forest, the Convent and Academy at St. Mary-of-the-Woods in 1860 would seem to have been too remote, too securely enclosed, to hear the rumblings of the approaching national disturbance. Echoes of trouble, however, reached even to this secluded spot. There were many pupils from the South at the boarding school, and in the order there were members from widely sepa-

rated States. Letters to the students and to the Sisters confirmed reports of the momentous question then agitating and dividing the people; but, a happy adjustment of difficulties was hoped for, and prayers were redoubled for a solution that would bring quiet and contentment to all. Great, then, was the shock when it became known that war had been declared, and that the sad and dreadful conflict had begun.

It was not long before the battle's toll called for the aid of nurses. The Sisters, one and all, stood in readiness for the call, should it come, though of course only a comparatively small number could be chosen. The schools must be kept open, if at all possible. Most of the Sisters were in the schools. After the

call did come, the Mother Superior wrote in the Community Records: "This is an eventful occasion for the Community. May Our Divine Lord help us to perform well the duties we are now undertaking."

With the opening of the spring of 1861 the gloomiest forebodings began to be realized. The sentiment of the different localities was variously expressed. What was the Government's attitude? Suspense did not last long. "The Union forever" was Indiana's response to the guns of the South.

At the outbreak of the rebellion, so long as the Slavery Question was merely the subject of debate, the State was divided in sentiment. Slavery, as an institution, was forbidden by the constitution of Indiana; yet, there were over a

hundred slaves in the southern counties, and a few more were scattered farther north, brought in by settlers from Virginia, North Carolina, and Kentucky. These slave owners did not wish to lose their "Property," as they termed the slave, and they had many sympathizers. A large number, while deploring the existence of slavery in our free land, maintained that the Missouri Compromise Act should remain in force as a means to preserve peace. They hoped by concessions to quell the agitation for freedom of the slaves, which was vigorously advocated by the abolitionists. Peace and union they held as their dearest prerogative; but, it must be peace on principle, and union on principle.

As principle was the contention on both sides, feeling ran high; thus in the

early days of the conflict Indiana was a pivotal State. When Secession however became the issue, the State gallantly rallied to the Union. Volunteers came forth before they were called for by the Federal Government, and ten thousand were immediately offered to the President by the Governor, when only five thousand had been asked for. Quickly they came, and quickly they went. New ranks were formed and soon, too, they were gone to the conflict, till the number all signed was two hundred and twenty-eight thousand. The records show that an Indiana soldier was the first to yield his life on the battlefield; and that the last battle of the war was fought by Indiana troops.

Wonderful enthusiasm inspired not only the soldiers themselves but the

whole population, so that the patriotism of Indiana was quoted as an example for emulation in other states. This blending of forces, a short time previously so scattered and menacing, was due to the dominating personality of Governor Morton, who has been styled the greatest of the War Governors—the greatest because he had the greatest differences to compose, the greatest opposition to combat: an adverse and disloyal legislature, and secret organizations that honeycombed the State and were bent on establishing a Northern Confederacy. He not only vanquished his foes but brought the greater number to loyal support.

The Governor's interest followed the soldiers wherever they were, whether in camp or in the field. Notwithstanding his care and despatch, the haste with

which mobilization was necessarily conducted was responsible, in the beginning, for the inadequate accommodation of the troops at the camp in Indianapolis. Many fell sick. The City Hospital, at that time recently built, was offered and accepted for sick soldiers, but the man-

The legislature of 1863 was adverse to the war, and the party sustaining the war. It refused to receive Gov. Morton's message. It tried to deprive him of the constitutional command of the State militia. It proposed no less than thirty measures of truce or peace with the Confederate States. It failed to make any appropriations to carry on the State civil government, or the military contributions to the general government.

This forced Governor Morton to raise money by loans and popular contributions, both for these purposes and for the payment of interest on the State debt to avoid the ruinous imputation of repudiation, which was so disastrous from 1841 to 1846. He constituted a "financial bureau" to meet the emergency, and for two years governed without any connection with the other State offices, which were in the hands of political antagonists and friends of the Confederacy. The Legislature of 1865, however, was of a different complexion, and legalized all the Governor's acts, paid his debts, and reimbursed his loans and contributions. (Sulgrove—"History of Indianapolis and Marion County," Page 317).

agement was so unsuccessful, owing to the want of proper help and organization, that the doctors and authorities were distressed. They turned to the Sisters for aid, and sent in their appeal through Monsignor Bessonies, the pastor of St. John's Church. Upon receiving the appeal, Mother Cecilia, then Superior General of the order of Providence, went over immediately from St. Mary-of-the-Woods to make arrangements. Two days later, May 17, 1861, the Sisters took charge.

Referring to the event, the Community diary says: "They found the new hospital in a miserable state of filth and disorder, and the sick in a wretched condition. The Sisters labored very hard to put the hospital in a proper condition; their exertions were crowned with the greatest

success. The change they soon effected in making it a clean, comfortable house for the sick soldiers, filled the people with admiration and inspired great confidence in them. This successful beginning was gratefully acknowledged to Our Lord, who permits us the happiness to serve Him in the person of the sick."

One month after the Sisters took command of the hospital, the Indianapolis Daily Journal, June 18, 1861, had this editorial:

"Providence sometimes turns even our most foolish acts into real blessings, as it often confounds our wisest into follies. Our City Hospital is a striking illustration. When it was commenced there was no need of it. By the time it was completed it was abandoned, and lewd

women and vagabond men turned it into a monstrous brothel. It seemed likely to turn out a nuisance so gross as to justify its destruction and make it necessary to spend a few hundred dollars to tear down what it cost \$30,000 to erect. But the war came, and with it the gathering of forces and its accompanying evils and sickness. There were but very inadequate accommodations in the camp for the sick; none in fact, for the time. The City Hospital seemed a special providence, sent in the very nick of time. It was exactly what was most needed. The frail, damp structures of the camp could protect the sick but little better than tents; and the dry, clean airy bed chambers that cure far better than medicine, were out of the question. The City Hospital could supply all, and of the best construction.

"The breaking out of the measles in the State encampment was the first demonstration of its necessity. The surgeons of that encampment, Drs. Jameson and Kitchen, speedily prepared for use, and organized a hospital force, under the supervision of the Sisters of Providence of Terre Haute [St. Mary-of-the-Woods] who gave their invaluable services, as those associations always do, without pay, purely in discharge of a high Christian duty. An appeal to our ladies of the city supplied it with an abundance of excellent bed-clothing, towels and other necessary articles. The Sisters took charge of the cooking, cleaning, washing and general house-keeping of the establishment, and most admirably have they performed their unpleasant but noble duty. Now it is as complete in its arrangement,

clean, well-ventilated, well-provided, and comfortable as any hospital in the country. We visited it the other day, and were astonished to find how thoroughly all the needs of the sick had been provided for in the little time that has elapsed since the building was occupied.

"There are now about sixty patients, the greater part down with the measles, and not all seriously sick. Two or three have pneumonia, supervening on measles, and are quite sick, and a few others have typhoid, but are improving. Not more than two are considered at all dangerous. There have not been less than fifty patients in the hospital at one time since it was organized, and sometimes there were nearly one hundred. Altogether about three hundred have been treated since the hospital opened. All

the work of the hospital is done in the building under the care of the Sisters. At first the washing was done abroad, but it was determined to do it in the building, and the first week's bill showed a saving that paid for the stove that was used. There is no waste, no dirt, no useless hands about the establishment. Everything is substantial, clean, orderly and complete. We doubt if the splendid hospitals of eastern cities can show a more perfect arrangement for the sick than the little hastily organized hospital here."

Further details are subjoined, taken from "Greater Indianapolis" by Jacob Piatt Dunn. He says:

"When the volunteers began assembling here at the new State Fair Grounds (Morton Place) the first hospital in

Indianapolis, opened in a barracks 10x20 feet, was under the charge of Dr. W. B. Fletcher until he went off with his regiment. It was soon outgrown, and it is averred that the sick were in some cases housed in the cattle stalls. On May 18, 1861, the city turned its hospital building over to the United States Government, which used it as a military hospital until July 1, 1865, and then four months longer as a soldier's home, surrendering it to the city in November, 1865. The National government during its occupancy, added two three-story ells to the building, and also put up fences, out-buildings, and wooden barracks for wards.

"The first civic patient treated in the City Hospital was a man who fell from a hotel window in Indianapolis, and was

taken to the hospital when it was used as a United States Military Hospital, with Dr. J. Kitchen of Indianapolis as military surgeon of the post, and Dr. Milton M. Wishard, medical officer in charge. The man died, and rumor has it that the sixty dollars found on his person was expended (as he had no heir) in planting the sixty soft maples which now embellish the hospital grounds."

The public read with avidity the reports and other articles published in the Indianapolis Daily Journal, the official paper of the Government. Perhaps a dear name met the reader's eye, but it was comfort to know, at least, when and where and how the Boys in Blue had met their fate. Of very special interest therefore was the issue of Friday morn-

ing, August 16, 1861, which gave in full the sad record.

**Report of the Surgeons of the
Military Hospital**

"To Miles Murphy, Inspector-General:

"Dear Sir: In obedience to your request, we cheerfully furnish for your disposal, the following brief report of the number of patients treated at the City (Military) Hospital, Indianapolis, with the results.

"The Hospital was secured for the exclusive use of the sick soldiers on the 29th day of April last, since which time the names of six hundred and forty have been entered on the register, in connection with the diseases named below:

Measles	430
Varioloid	1
Intermittent Fever.....	32
Remittent Fever	13
Bilious Fever	25
Typhoid Fever	7

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Catarrhal Fever	2
Bronchitis	1
Pleurisy	1
Pneumonia	26
Congestion of the Brain.....	1
Cholera Morbus	2
Dysentery	26
Obstinate Diarrhea	28
Delirium Tremens	5
Acute Rheumatism	4
Mumps	4
Neuralgia	1
Inflammation of the Tonsils.....	1
Inflammation of the Liver.....	1
Bad Rupture	1
Sun Stroke	1
Erysipelas	1
Burn	1
General Debility	1
Diseases of the Eye.....	8
Private Diseases	7
Fracture of the Thigh.....	1
Gun Shot Wounds and Other Injuries.....	8

"Of these cases, five hundred and ninety-three have recovered and been discharged, thirteen have died, and thirty-four remain under treatment, all of whom are likely to recover, save one.

"When it is remembered that a large number of cases, less violent, were treated at the different camp dispensaries, and

only the most severe ones sent to the Hospital, the ratio of mortality, only about two per cent, will appear small.

"It is proper to mention, also, that of those who died two were in a hopeless condition from delirium tremens when received, and two others died in consequence of surfeiting with cherries when convalescent after measles.

"We furnish, in this connection, the names of those who died, together with the Company and Regiment to which they belonged:

C. J. Overman, Co. K, 8th Regiment
Edward Spaulding, Capt. Chancey's Co.,
12th Regiment
John W. Lyon, Co. H, 9th Regiment
David Easler, Co. B, 12th Regiment
Henry L. Sibbard, Capt. Bracken's Cavalry
Jacob Bowman, Co. F, 15th Regiment
William H. Bates, Co. C, 13th Regiment
John Raper, Co. K, 14th Regiment
John Jackson, Capt. Jacob's Co., 19th Regiment
William Lynch, Capt. Jacob's Co., 19th Reg.
John B. Jackson, Co. D, 14th Regiment
Henry Brown, Co. B, 17th Regiment
William F. Atville, a Virginian

"The case of varioloid was discovered in Camp Sullivan early in May, and was managed with the greatest possible secrecy, in order to prevent the troops from becoming panic-stricken.

"In order to save the great cost of erecting and furnishing suitable quarters for the sick of the different regiments, and providing the necessary cooks and nurses, it was arranged by you in the month of June, that all the very sick should be sent to the City Hospital. This, owing to a severe epidemic of the measles, made additional accommodations indispensable, and a long but cheap building was constructed near the rear of the Hospital, which answered a most excellent purpose. This building is now used for a summer kitchen, dining room and wash-house, while the basement of the main building is being thoroughly cleansed and white-washed.

"The house, owing to the kindness of generous citizens, is now very well supplied with sheets, pillow-cases, bedspreads, blankets, window curtains, etc.

"For sometime all these things, together with the personal linen of the patients, have been washed and ironed in the house, at an expense of only about four dollars per week, and this when we, for a long time, had over a hundred patients to care for daily.

"Cleanliness, so conducive to health, has been carefully attended to, but occasionally with not as much success as was desired, the fault being with the men themselves.

"During the month of July an account was kept of provisions, including such luxuries as ice, milk, oranges, lemons, berries, and other things of the kind, and the average daily expense for each inmate was found to be within a fraction of

eleven cents, while about seven cents a day was the average cost per patient for cooking, nursing, washing, cleaning, etc. It is but fair to state, however, that many delicacies sent in by kind friends reduced expenses somewhat, and that some of the most valuable help was rendered free of charge.

"We take pleasure in acknowledging valuable aid from Drs. Bobbs and Edgerly, who were associated with us in the conduct of the Hospital prior to June 22nd; and also in certifying to the faithfulness of all employees, particularly John A. Reaume, steward, and William Moriarity, one of the ward masters.

"In conclusion, we feel that we have performed only a plain, straight-forward duty, and that whatever success may have attended the management of the Hospital is due in a great degree to the

noble and self-sacrificing efforts of those meek and worthy women—the Sisters of Providence.

Signed: John M. Kitchen
 P. H. Jameson
 Indianapolis, Aug. 14, 1861."

Under date of January 10, 1863, the Journal published entire the Governor's Message (eight and a half columns), in concluding which the Governor said:

"Your attention is invited to the report of Drs. Kitchen and Jameson, and to the just acknowledgment therein made of the services of the "Sisters of Providence."

With the caption "The Indiana Hospitals," a very appreciative narrative appeared March 23, 1863. By way of introduction, the editor stated:

"We publish the following report of a special committee of the House of Repre-

sentatives on the conduct of the hospitals in this city as an article of interest to those interested in the treatment of our soldiers.

"Mr. Ferris submitted the following report:

"Mr. Speaker, the special committee appointed to visit the hospitals in and about the City of Indianapolis, where the sick and wounded soldiers are taken care of, have performed their duty, and would respectfully submit the following report:

"The Committee found the different hospitals under the charge of Drs. John M. Kitchen and P. H. Jameson, and the Committee takes pleasure in saying that under the management of these gentlemen, the accommodations for the sick and wounded soldiers are as near perfection as it is possible they could be made with the means at their disposal.

"There is at each of the camps near the City, a Receiving Hospital, under the immediate care of Dr. Jameson (except Camp Morton) where the sick of each regiment are reported every morning, and each severe case is at once sent to the General Hospital; but very many cases are entirely treated at these receiving hospitals.

"At Noble Barracks there are about five hundred artillerymen. At the Camp Hospital an average of twenty are reported sick each morning, but few of whom are sent to the General Hospital for the reason above given.

"The hospital register shows one hundred and fifteen sick received since November 22, 1862.

"At Camp Carrington there are about seven hundred men, and for several days the morning report of the sick shows an average of four, which indicates that at

present the soldiers at that camp enjoy universal good health.

"At the City Barracks, or Soldiers' Home, there are about two hundred men of different regiments, besides the four companies constituting the Provost Guards. This is called the Convalescent Barracks, a place where convalescent soldiers stay until they are able to return to their regiments; and it is also where soldiers passing through the city to and from their regiments make their home. Some fifty or seventy-five leave this place daily, and their places are filled with as many new arrivals. The accommodations there are sufficient to feed an entire regiment, if necessary.

"At each of these camps medical stewards and attendants, selected from the rank and file of the army, are found, who have a good knowledge of medicine, and who the more readily appreciate the

wants and necessities of the sick soldiers.

"The Committee could not but notice the kind attention and gentlemanly deportment of these stewards and attendants, as attested by the sick, and the mention of their names in this report would be a pleasure to the Committee; but, lest an unintentional omission of some might do injustice, we have omitted it.

"Another feature noticed at these hospitals was the air of neatness and comfort which pervades them, and which speaks much in commendation of the gentlemen who have labored so assiduously in this department.

"The City Hospital, we are informed, has been generously given up by the city authorities free of charge, to be used as a general hospital for the soldiers, and is under the immediate charge of Dr. Kitchen.

"We believe that it would be impossi-

ble to make this department more efficient than it is under his charge. It will require only a visit to this place to satisfy anyone that the Committee does not exaggerate in making this statement, and those who are receiving the benefit of the care shown the sick at this place will bear us witness of the fact. There are at present about twenty Confederate prisoners (mostly wounded) and one hundred and fifty Union soldiers in the different wards of this hospital.

"The building will accommodate about two hundred and seventy-five patients. Since May 1, 1861, about five thousand five hundred Union soldiers have been under treatment here, and of this number only about two hundred and thirteen died. When we consider that it is only the severe cases that are sent to the hospital, it will be seen that the ratio of mortality is by no means large.

"Indiana will never want for brave sons to go forth and fight her battles and face danger to preserve her fair name, so long as they can be assured that if they are unfortunate they will not be neglected and forgotten.

"Ever since the war began Drs. Kitchen and Jameson have been untiring in their efforts in this department, and many a soldier will attest their vigilance and their care.

"The thanks of all are due them for their efforts, and the gratitude of those to whom they have ministered will give the best assurance of the fidelity with which they have discharged their duties.

"The Committee feel it their duty in this connection, to mention the Sisters of Providence, who, with busy hands and willing hearts, are vigilant and untiring in their ministrations to the wants and necessities of the unfortunate soldiers.

Without compensation for nearly two years the Sisters have had the entire charge of the domestic department at the general hospital, in which neatness and economy are the prominent characteristics. Quietly but earnestly have they fulfilled this mission of love and kindness; and we most cheerfully assure that thousands of grateful hearts will cherish these deeds in kind remembrance, and we sincerely hope that heaven may, in answer to the fervent prayer of many a brave soldier, confer upon these Sisters blessings unnumbered which gold can never purchase.

Respectfully submitted,
Ed. P. Ferris, Chairman,
Committee."

Another article, whose very able and sympathetic author reached the hearts of

his readers, appeared Thursday, March 8, 1864. It bore the title

City General Hospital

"We improved a recent visit to the City Hospital [the staff reporter says] to take a look through the various departments, and note the manner in which the sick and wounded are cared for. The result to us was very satisfactory. The clean swept, well ventilated rooms, the substantial and comfortable character of all furniture, and the well arranged system of nursing and medical attention, give to the whole establishment an air of home-like quiet, comfort and rest, truly gratifying to those who sympathize with affliction and suffering. The patients, of whom there are about two hundred and fifty, are assigned to different wards, according to a distinct classification of conditions and diseases, such as the

wards for fevers, measles, erysipelas, wounds, convalescents, etc., and these again graduated in accordance with the condition of the disease. Each ward has a suitable number of attendants, and all are under the immediate supervision of skillful surgeons. A record is kept of the name, regiment, and company, disease, and number of ward and hammock of each patient admitted, and of all transfers, so that any patient in the hospital can be found, and all the facts in relation to his case learned, in a few minutes. The date of the death, or the discharge from the hospital, of any patient, or number of the grave, is also carefully preserved.

"A new and very complete dispensary and store-room has been established in what was formerly the first ward, which has been fitted up for the purpose, and a competent druggist employed, who is

constantly in attendance to fill prescriptions by the physician. Convenient presses or wardrobes have also been recently constructed in each ward, which are found to be very useful for preserving the clothing of patients and various articles constantly needed by the nurses.

"The dining rooms for the attendants and convalescent patients are as well arranged and conveniently furnished as in any well regulated boarding house, and the preparation and time of meals are attended to with scrupulous promptness and care. The meals for the sick are furnished by the attendants who go to the kitchen with trays in regular divisions, at the ringing of a bell, where from an abundant and various store each takes what is required for the patients in his charge. The cooking is all done by steam on a large range, and everything is prepared in a most careful manner.

There are ten women employed in the hospital, some of them of several years' experience as cooks and attendants, besides the Sisters of Providence who superintend and direct all the domestic arrangements, and give comfort and cheer to the sick in a thousand kind attentions.

"Dr. Kitchen, Surgeon-in-chief of the Hospital, Drs. Wishard and Merryman, the house physicians, and Wm. F. McAllister, Hospital steward, with the Sisters of Providence in attendance, were highly complimented by the Board of Medical Inspectors on the occasion of their recent visit from Washington for the excellent manner in which the institution is conducted.

"The regulations governing the Hospital are similar to those in all well-regulated institutions of this kind. No patient, nurse, or attendant is allowed to leave the Hospital without permission

from the surgeon in charge. No smoking, swearing or loud talking is permitted. Cleanliness and good order are strictly observed at all times in all wards. Visitors are not allowed to enter the wards without permission. No provisions or spirituous liquors are allowed to be taken within the hospital or given to patients without permission.

"We understand from Dr. Wishard that it is in contemplation to make some very desirable improvements about the grounds during the summer, to plant a large number of evergreens, erect arbors, etc. When this is done, and other interior improvements perfected, the City Hospital will become an attractive home for rest and recovery to the weary, sick, and wounded heroes."

Three months later comes this story

in the Indianapolis Daily Journal, Saturday morning, June 11, 1864.

Our City General Hospital

"The arrival of seventy-five sick and wounded Indianians of Sherman's army, from the hospitals of Louisville and Jeffersonville, at our City General Hospital, called us to that institution yesterday to ascertain their names and condition. We found them in good condition and in the finest spirits imaginable. One of them said to us that next to home it was the sweetest, quietest spot he had ever found. All of them with whom we conversed said there was no comparison between this and the hospitals at Louisville and Jeffersonville. There they were fed on bread and coffee twice a day, and the wounds were dressed only about once in three days. Here they have regular meals of everything suited to their con-

dition, receive constant and tender care from the nurses, and medical attention from the physician every day. All of them, without some accident, will get well. Many of them are now able to sit up and go out of doors. There are but few serious cases of wounds or sickness among them. Their names and description of their wounds or diseases will be found in another paragraph.

"The Hospital is in fine condition. Every part is as clean as a well-kept parlor. We went through all the wards and nowhere did we observe the indication of the least neglect. The floors are washed every morning, the bedding and clothing at least once a week. The new building has just been re-whitewashed, and though it contains the worst cases, it is as cleanly kept as the main building. It requires extra effort to keep this new building in good order. It was built by

government contract and is a rather shabby job. Floors leak and the ceiling and casings have become warped and shrunken.

"The laundry, in charge of the Sisters of Providence with several female assistants, is a place of work. A thousand pieces of clothing are washed and ironed every week, besides the washing of about five hundred sheets, etc.

"Many improvements have been made this summer in and about the Hospital, adding much to convenience and beauty. Store and baggage rooms have been fitted up, wardrobes placed in all the wards, and the bathrooms thoroughly renovated and supplied with apparatus for hot, cold, and shower baths. An excellent library, gotten up through the efforts of Chaplain Eddy, has been placed in the Hospital, and in every ward soldiers may

be seen, book in hand, whiling away the tedious hours of their recovery.

"The dead rooms have been recently beautifully arranged by the Sisters of Providence. They are hung with white muslin, festooned with black crepe, and at the head of each room is the Stars and Stripes, also draped in mourning. At the other end are beautiful pen designs, executed by an inmate of the Hospital with the words: **For Their Country They Died, They are Dead, but We Forget Them Not;** and appropriate passages of Scripture.

"The grounds have been very tastefully laid out, decorated with about three hundred evergreens and trees, and variegated with rare plants and flowers. Flower beds have been constructed in different localities, some heart-shaped, others star-shaped. The bank at the front and side of the Hospital has been sodded, and

what was a bare mud bank last year, is now a beautiful grassy declivity. Hospital Steward McAllister is entitled to the credit for most of these outer improvements, all of which have a happy effect upon the convalescing inmates.

The last of these articles is dated July 22, 1864, having for its subject

Hospital Routine

The Journal says:

"The business of the day begins at five o'clock. At that hour the nurses busy themselves in cleaning the spittoons, washing the faces and arms of the patients, sweeping the wards and making everything tidy. Meanwhile the dressers are at work, cleaning and bandaging the wounds, causing intense pain by the necessary probings, pressures, plasterings, etc., and a great deal of comfort by their

generally cheerful reports to the patients of the improvement perceptible.

"If they do not always tell the truth they are pardonable, for it would be very cruel to reveal every bad symptom, so long as there is hope of ultimate recovery. By seven o'clock everything is ready for breakfast, which is of three classes—regular, which is for the mass of the patients well enough to eat heartily; special, which is for those whose wounds or health may require more delicate food; and extra, for those (generally officers) who pay their dollar a day for subsistence. Each class of food is substantial and excellent, well cooked and neatly served. That stomach would be very delicate which would revolt at any of it.

"After breakfast there is more sweeping, mopping, bed-changing, etc., and two or three times a week a general scrubbing. At regular intervals through the

day there is a distribution of milk punch, beef tea, stimulants of various kinds, medicines, etc., according to the directions of the day, placed at the head of each patient. Dinner at twelve, supper at six, and retirement of the day nurses and the extinction of the lights at nine o'clock. Then come the night-watchers and silence. For hours together, sometimes, there is the stillness of death, when you can hear the tread of a mouse; and yet, amid the stillness there is a vast deal of pain, quietly and uncomplainingly borne by the noble fellows who have been wounded in battle. God bless them for their heroism in the field, and for their equal heroism on their weary couches! A grateful country will remember and reward them.

"Throughout the night at fixed hours, there is distribution of medicines and stimulants, the wetting of bandages, and

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such other attentions as are required for the comfort of the patients. And so wear away the long weary hours of the night."

The information following is also valuable, as it is the testimony of Colonel Oran Perry of the 69th Regiment of Indiana, who, until his death in 1929, was the faithful guardian of the Soldiers' Monument in the city of Indianapolis. Col. Perry writes: "General Carrington was in command of all the forces here at the time the Sisters were in the service. The barracks and hospital were located on West Maryland Street. Regiments passing through the city were served there. I passed a night there myself. I was on the field of action from 1861 to the end of the war. Colonel Owens of the 60th Regiment was called home from

the field of action to take command in the Confederate prison located here in the city. It is probable that all the Sisters in the Service in the city here were, at times, on duty in this prison. Many of the prisoners were sick, and numbers died there. The prisoners were so well treated that the Confederate Army sent a bust of Colonel Owens to Indianapolis in acknowledgment of the tender care of their prisoners.

"The Sisters were seen everywhere, on the boats, in the barracks, in the streets, always giving the most tender care to the soldiers."

The Soldiers' Home referred to by Colonel Perry, is described in Sulgrove's "History of Indianapolis and Marion

County, Indiana," from which these excerpts are taken.

"The Soldiers' Home, like the Arsenal, was the suggestion of Governor Morton's restless solicitude for the welfare of the State troops. This city was the main depot, recruiting station, drill camp, and preparatory school of the whole State, and it was the chief resting-place of other troops passing east or west to the front. Of course, they always landed here hungry, dusty, tired, and a sound sleep, or a bath, and a good meal were sometimes worth a man's life. . . .

"The Soldiers' Home was a sort of military hotel in which all the accommodations were free. During the first months of the war, the State Sanitary Commission had agents at the Union Depot to supply

passing troops and take care of the sick at hotels; but this was expensive and inconvenient, so a camp was established on vacant ground south of the depot, with hospital tents and other conveniences, and maintained until 1862, when the Governor resolved to establish a permanent home.

"Quartermaster Asahel Stone selected the grove on the west side of West Street, just north of the Vandalia Railroad, and here temporary but adequate and comfortable frame buildings were erected, enlarged and added to, until they could accommodate 1,800 with beds and 8,000 with meals every day."

Numerous were the anecdotes that the Sisters who had seen service used to relate, some pathetic and grave, others

amusing. Of the latter, the Doctors used to tell this: "An Indiana soldier who was accused of stealing a rebel's goose, said he found the bird hissing at the American Flag, so he arrested it for treason."

In connection with the story of those stirring times, very distinctly preserved, is the remembrance that the Sisters loved the name of Governor Morton because he loved the soldiers so tenderly. They said his eyes would fill with tears as he passed from one to another and heard their moans or beheld their horrible wounds. He did everything he could for their comfort, and that with the utmost despatch. The wounded would relate how he shook hands with them and spoke soothing words when they fell at the battle of Fort Donelson, and helped

with his own hands to get them transported "back home." Whether they were sick or well, the Governor had a personal interest in them, kept in touch with them wherever they were, sent them warm clothing as soon as he heard they were suffering from cold, and this without being authorized to do so, or losing time to reach the general supplies in the East. Some said he overstepped his authority. If he did, the country was with him on account of the cause.

The Sisters also received personal little attentions from the Governor. As an instance it may be mentioned that, presented with a unique seal by some merchants of Cincinnati, he brought it to the Hospital to show it to them. This curious seal was made of a hickory nut. In the

hollow or cut end of the nut was a small but very distinct copy of a likeness of General Jackson. On the gold band surrounding the photograph were to be found the celebrated words of Old Hickory, "The Union must be preserved." On one side of the seal was a small United States coat of arms, with colors enamelled in gold, and the whole surrounded by a spread eagle.

Sister Mary Ambrose, the Superior of St. John's Academy in Indianapolis from 1859 to 1863, often spoke of the visits she used to make to the hospital. After school hours she would borrow a horse and buggy and drive out to bring in one Sister who could be spared, so that she might assist at Holy Mass the next morning; after which she would drive her

back. The Sisters took turns to come in, the arrangement thus affording each one the happiness of receiving the sacraments once a week. On one occasion she took with her the Mistress of Novices from St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Sister Mary Joseph Le Fer de la Motte, who wrote to her family in France the following details:

"I spent four days in Indianapolis. The superior of the Hospital is one of my old Novices. Escorted by her we visited the several wards where there were two hundred patients. Fifty more were daily expected. Since August 18th nineteen of the patients have been baptized; nearly all of them have died. I noticed one young man about twenty years of age, as serious as a man of sixty. He was suffering from a relapse of typhoid fever. The

steward told me that that morning the doctor offered him a dollar if he would smile; but the poor fellow would not do it. I hoped to get a smile without paying for it, but was no more successful than the doctor had been. Sister Mary Ambrose asked him what he wished for his dinner.

"He replied, 'Twelve sweet cakes.'

"I said to her: 'Will you give them to him?'

" 'Oh, certainly,' she answered, 'he never asks for less.'

" 'But you will kill him,' I urged.

" 'Not at all,' she replied, 'but if he were to die he would be happy. He often sheds tears when I speak of God and our Blessed Mother, but I have never seen him smile.' "

Sister Mary Joseph concluded by saying: "When I last heard of 'Sweet Cakes' he was convalescing rapidly."

The convenience of a horse and buggy at the call of the Sisters mentioned above is due, no doubt, to an item written for the Indianapolis Sentinel, which appeared on the editorial page in the issue of February 25, 1862. It runs thus:

"Editor Sentinel: I consider it a fact worthy of notice that the Sisters of Providence, who have charge of the Military Hospital, are not furnished with a conveyance to and from the City, but are obliged to wade through mud and mire on foot. A carriage is furnished them on Sundays, it is true, but the religious duties of the Sisters make it necessary that they should come into town every day, and it

is a crying shame that they should be allowed to walk. I can safely say that the greater part of the way to the Hospital the mud is knee deep. A small one-horse spring wagon would be of infinite use, and where so much money is spent, why not a little be invested to this good purpose? The Sisters are uncomplaining, and for that reason their comfort should the more carefully be looked after. I would be glad if you would call attention to the matter through the columns of the Sentinel. Respectfully, L. D."

Besides the Sister Nurses at the Indianapolis Hospital, two other Sisters of Providence were also in the Service at a temporary hospital in Vincennes. A "History of Knox and Daviess Counties" gives the fact: "According to the policy

of Governor Morton, Indiana soldiers were brought home for treatment and nursing. After the battle of Fort Donelson the Bishop of Vincennes tendered the use of the Catholic Seminary for the sick and wounded and the assistance of the Sisters in caring for them." Records at Vincennes show that the sick of the 19th Illinois Regiment were also cared for at this emergency hospital.

The Community annals relate that at the camp formed near Vincennes to receive recruits, some of the men fell sick of the most virulent contagious disease, which made it necessary to care for them apart, and that Bishop St. Palais offered the College building and asked for two Sisters to take charge of the stricken soldiers. There not being any Sisters at

St. Mary-of-the-Woods who could be spared for that purpose, Sister St. Felix Buchanan and Sister Sophy Glenn were called to Vincennes from their respective establishments (the former the superior of the house at Madison, the latter a teacher at Cannelton) to be employed according to the request of the Bishop.

Under date of July 23, 1861, the Indianapolis Daily Journal quotes from the Evansville Journal:

"We learn that the Sisters of Charity in Vincennes [they were Sisters of Providence], with a kindness characteristic of the order, have offered their commodious building as a hospital to the Vincennes regiment. They also volunteer their services as nurses. Such conduct will be

remembered and appreciated by the soldiers."

This Emergency Hospital was opened about the middle of April and closed at the end of July. Prior to this a hundred poor patients were huddled together in one room. Those three months of service in the improvised hospital were equal, it might be said, to as many years, or more, of ordinary hospital work, on account of the hardships endured. The contagion created a panic, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that supplies could be obtained. Persons who were willing to assist were obliged to go at night and leave what they brought outside the house. The hired help fled at the approach of danger, leaving the Sisters alone to care for the stricken. The lives



To the right War Nurse
Sister St. Felix Buchanan

of the Sisters were in danger from delirious fever patients, as well as from the epidemic. Defenseless and isolated, the Sisters still remained at their post even washing the linen at night and cutting the wood for the fires. The Doctors succeeded after awhile in getting an old man to care for the fires and carry water. He could do little else. After the first terror somewhat subsided, the people of Vincennes ventured a little and gradually came to the relief of the Sister heroines.

The Sisters who were in the Service at the Military Hospital in Indianapolis were: Sister Athanasius Fogarty, Sister Eugenia Gorman, Sister Mary Frances Guthneck, Sister Mary Rose O'Donaghue, and Sister Mathilda Swimley. Their devotedness, as we have seen from

the reports, was greatly appreciated by the doctors and authorities; in fact, they won all hearts. The ladies of the city, hearing that the Sisters had poor accommodations for themselves, banded together and bought furniture and other things to make their rooms comfortable.

At the end of the war, the Hospital having been closed, the Sisters opened a home called St. John's Infirmary, for the infirm soldiers who had no place to go, or who were not yet sufficiently recovered to be able to travel. The names of four other Sisters gained wide popularity here, and were associated in the minds of the people with those who had been at the hospital; these were Sister Henrietta McKenzie, Sister Frances Ann Carney,

Sister Louise Mahoney, and Sister Helena Burns.

The one who was most widely known among the Sister Nurses during the war period was Sister Athanasius, the directress of the Military Hospital, and also of St. John's Infirmary. Her name was a household word in Indianapolis, and her fame yet lingers among the older generation.

From the day she assumed charge of the hospital to the close of the war, her career was marked by marvelous achievement. She was noted for her cheerfulness, charity, and tact. The physicians who attended the hospital said that the success of the institution was due to her ability alone, not to their management. How much of her nights was given to

hard labor after the day's stress, can never be fully known. Often when she was supposed to be taking her well-earned rest, she would be washing blankets, and so forth. It happened sometimes that suspected cases of contagion were taken from the trains, that brought in the wounded, outside the city, and put on flat boats and sent up the river. Sister Athanasius hearing about it, and fearing (not without good reason) that they might be left without attention, would go with a Sister companion, her basket of supplies and dainties in hand, to look after her "separated brethren," as she called them. She had a standing permit to leave the enclosure at any time she wished; her purpose was never questioned. Lest the more timid should be

fearful, did they know of these trips, she would make them at night. They were extremely perilous, as she could reach the boats only by passing over a plank placed on logs. On one occasion a poor victim was so glad to see her that he offered to shake hands with her. She warmly grasped the scaly hand, declaring afterwards that she would rather have been stricken herself than refuse that little comfort to a dying soldier. Awed by this heroic act, the guards made no comment, too deeply touched by the human kindness they witnessed in her deed. She improvised a "fumigation camp" for herself, whereby she removed any cause of exposure to the hospital before entering again, and no inconvenience resulted.

It is said there were seven thousand Confederate prisoners in Indianapolis at one time. Some of them fell sick. Sister went to them also and administered to their needs with unquestioning devotedness. On one occasion the following dialogue took place:

"Sister, don't you know that we are rebels? See the gray."

Sister smiled, "You are a wounded soldier, and a Christian, I hope."

"What is a Christian, Sister?"

"One who believes in Christ, the Son of God. You believe in Him, do you not?"

"Why —er—, do you, Sister?"

"Of course I do."

"Well, then, if you do, I do too." He was growing faint.

Sister said: "Have you ever been baptized?"

He did not know, but he wished to be a Christian, and averred that he would be a "mighty good one" when he "got out." Sister lost no time in giving him baptism, as his life was ebbing fast. He then fixed his eyes upon her with a bright smile and said, "Good-bye, good friend. I must obey orders. I guess it —is— this way —out."

When the Military Hospital closed at the end of the war, Sister Athanasius was placed in charge of St. John's Infirmary, where she remained three years. Falling sick, she was succeeded by Sister Henrietta, who was in charge until it closed in 1871. From time to time while in the

Service Sister Athanasius felt twitches of rheumatism. Severe attacks followed with increasing frequency. Finally, eighteen years before her death she became completely disabled and suffered intense pain, notwithstanding everything that was done to alleviate it.

In the earlier years of her sickness she could read and enjoy the conversation of others. When she learned, in 1887, that the people of Indianapolis proposed erecting a monument as a memorial to the fallen heroes, her delight was enthusiastic. She talked about it all the time, and she wanted it to be "grand, worthy." Her heart would have it, though she could not so state it, just as our beloved Whitcomb Riley expressed it:

LEST WE FORGET

And the answer came, we would build it
Out of our hopes made sure,
And out of our purest prayers and tears,
And out of our faith secure.

And see that ye build it stately,
In pillar and niche and gate,
And high in pose as the souls of those
It would commemorate.

Sister Athanasius did not live until the monument was completed. She passed to her eternal reward on April 11, 1900. The monument was not dedicated until May 15, 1902.

We borrow from the Indiana Centennial volume, its fine description of the magnificent Soldiers' Monument:

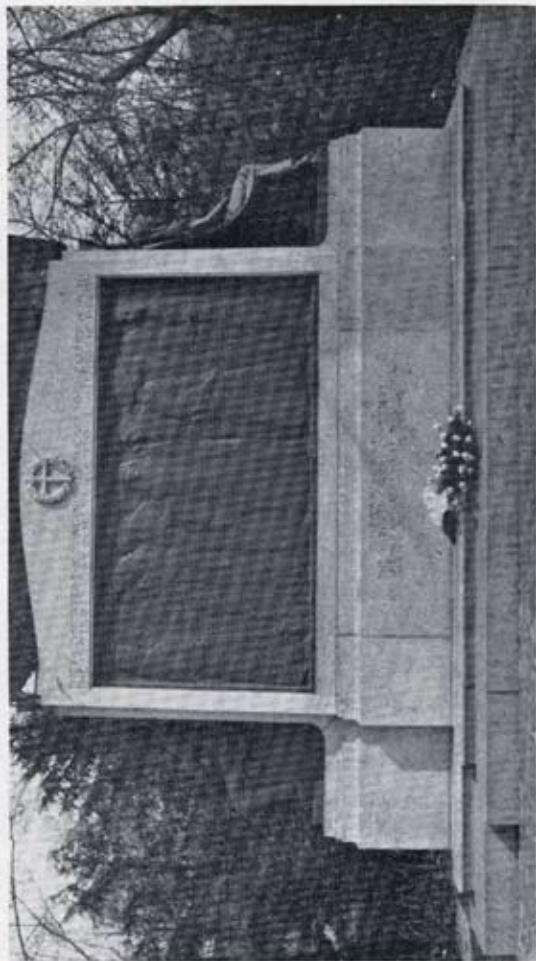
"Indianapolis has the proud distinction of containing the first monument ever erected in honor of the private soldier. It is also one of the few real works of art in this line to be found in America. It

is not a plain unsightly shaft, but a beautiful obelisk of artistic design, constructed of Indiana oolitic limestone, at a cost in excess of \$500,000. The park in which it stands, known as the Circle, has an area of three and a half acres, and lies at the intersection of Meridian and Market Streets. It is surrounded by a street paved with asphalt. There are four approaches to the Monument from the encircling street. The height, including the crowning figure, is 284½ feet. The top is reached by elevator and a stairway from the base of the interior of the shaft, where a magnificent view of Indianapolis and the surrounding country is obtained. Occupying positions between the converging points of the intersecting streets, are bronze statues of representative men—George Rogers Clark for the Revolu-

tionary period; William Henry Harrison, the Indian War of 1811; Governor Whitcomb, the Mexican War; and Governor Morton, the Civil War. The Indianapolis Memorial is conceded to be the greatest monument in the world, erected to commemorate the services of its citizen soldiery of the State. The legislature gave \$300,000; the balance, more than \$200,000, was furnished by organizations and private gifts."

This splendid expression of the people's grateful sentiment would have filled the soul of Sister Athanasius with rapturous joy, had she been able to follow its progress from week to week, through the papers or visits of friends; but a year before she died she was cut off entirely from such pleasure by the loss of her sight and hearing.

When the question arose in later years of a memorial to the Nuns of the Battlefield, the Sisters of Providence did not expect their War Nurses to be included, as they had not actually been on battlefields. Their friends, however, thought otherwise, and argued that the hospitals were battlefields where the dangers were as great, and the services as severe as in the open. Through Mrs. Margaret Taylor, State President of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, in Indianapolis, the Sisters of Providence were recommended to Mrs. Ellen Ryan Jolly, Chairman of the Nuns Memorial Committee, who immediately interested herself in their behalf. She also obtained Government headstones to mark the graves of the Nurses at St. Mary-of-the-Woods.



Monument to "Nuns of the Battlefield," Washington, D. C.

The installation of these tombstones in the little Convent Cemetery was an event of solemn grandeur, thrilling in its patriotic and religious blending. Over a thousand Sisters were then at the Mother House for the annual summer school and retreat. An altar had been improvised in the cemetery in front of the Calvary group that stands in the center at the far end. Large American flags were stretched on either side. Countless smaller flags decorated the Calvary mound, and a flag stood at the head of the grave of each war nurse, here and there among the other graves.

The choir of nearly a hundred voices, black veiled religious and white veiled novices, stood to the right. The Community gathered around on the walks and

among the graves; visitors mingled in the rear, and clergymen assisted at the altar. The sun was just rising. By the time it had climbed over the tree tops the solemn and beautiful Requiem Mass was ended. The scene was touching unto tears. The Celebrant was the Convent Chaplain, the Rt. Rev. Monsignor A. J. Rawlinson, Ph. D., War Chaplain of the 325th Field Artillery of the American Expeditionary Forces in France during the late World War. The blessing of the headstones at the graves of the War Nurses completed the inspiring ceremony. The day of this memorable solemnity was July 31, 1923, Feast of the Warrior Saint, Ignatius of Loyola.

More than sixty years had passed before the service rendered by the War Nurses of the various Sisterhoods was

recognized by the erection of a memorial. A splendid monument of granite and bronze in Washington, D. C., now stands as a witness to the general appreciation of their heroic labors.

The figure to the extreme right of the group represents a Sister of Providence of St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Small in proportion may have been the service given by this order, but the reverence of the Sisters for the cause and the sacred tradition is not small, and their desire to perpetuate the memory thereof has inspired the writing of this story for a "memorial in a book," lest we forget.